

Okayama Insider

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FREE

JUN

The sixth month of the 20th year of the Heisei period.

2008

水無月 (Minazuki) 平成20年

Despite the abundance of rainfall, this month is known as the "waterless month".

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Kojima-Japan's Jeans Mecca

It is said that Levis jeans are the origin of American jeans. The Kojima area of Kurashiki City is the home of Japanese jeans production, and now some of the world's top fashion brands use "Kojima brands" for their shows. That's right... fashionable jeans made right here in Okayama prefecture are being worn on catwalks the world over.

Kojima was originally well known for cotton cultivation and this background developed into a dyeing and sewing industry. Jeans were made here after the Second World War, and after 50 years of polishing the skills required, Kojima now is becoming world-famous amongst jeans lovers and fashion designers. People come to Kojima from all over Japan to visit local jeans makers, examine the skills of the craftsmen and to finally find their favourite designs. Some manufacturers even allow visitors to order "tailor-made" jeans with unique shapes, sizes and designs. If you are a jeans lover, you MUST visit Kojima, especially the following four places:

BETTY SMITH

You can select from many denim fabrics and styles and order your own style of jeans. There is a museum and a factory seconds outlet shop there. Order tailor-made jeans from ¥29,400. (Reservation necessary)

Jeans Museum: Open from 9.00 to 17.00 on weekdays, from 11.00 to 17.00 on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays.

Entrance is free

Factory outlet: Open from 11.00 to 17.00 only on Mondays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays

Ph. 086-473-4460

<http://www.betty.co.jp>

TAKASHIRO SENKOU (Takashiro dyeing factory)

Using a dying technique unchanged for the last 80 years, the denim fabric is dyed in indigo in a Bizenyaki kiln. (Bizenyaki is Okayama's traditional artistic pottery.)

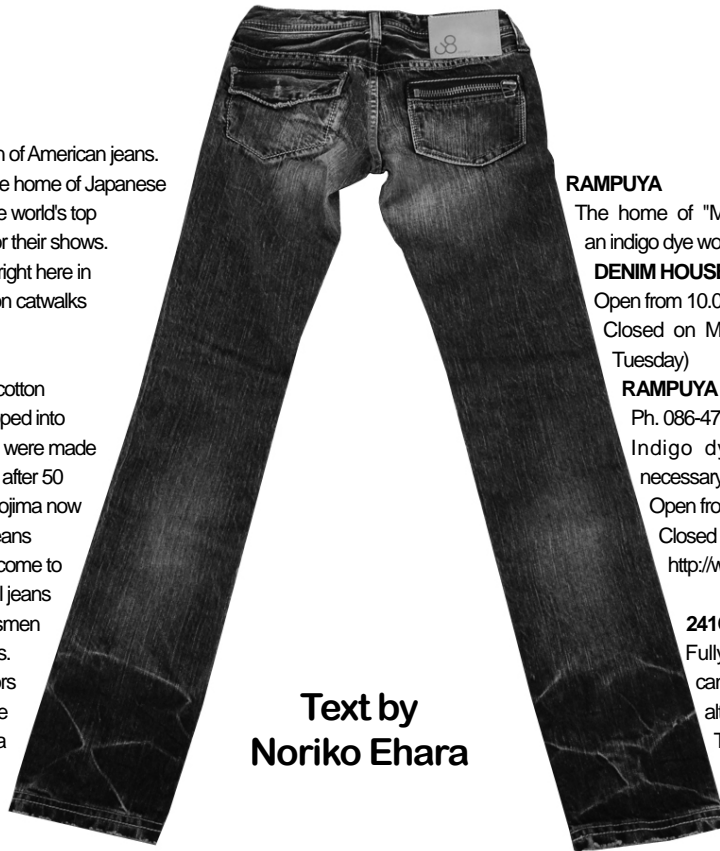
Open from 13.00 to 17.00

Closed indeterminately

Indigo dyeing lesson: from 2,000 yen (Reservation necessary)

Ph. 086-472-3105

<http://www.takashiro.info/>



Text by
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RAMPUYA

The home of "Momotaro Jeans." They have a shop and an indigo dye workshop.

DENIM HOUSE by RAMPUYA: Ph. 086-472-1301

Open from 10.00 to 18.00

Closed on Mondays (If Monday is Holiday, closed on Tuesday)

RAMPUYA Dyeing Workshop "Ai Nozoki"

Ph. 086-473-3670

Indigo dyeing lesson available (Reservation necessary)

Open from 10.00 to 16.00

Closed on Sundays and Holidays

<http://www.japanblue.co.jp/rampuya/>

241CO. (Nii Yon Ichi)

Fully tailor made jeans are available, or you can have standard designs individually altered to suit your needs.

They also have their own brand, "Win & Sons".

Open from 9.00 to 18.00

Full tailor made jeans from ¥70,000

Taylor altered jeans: from ¥38,000

(Reservation necessary)

Ph. 086-474-2916

<http://www.241co.com>

<http://www.winandsons.com>

The "Kojima Jeans Bus" is a convenient way to visit jeans makers and their shops!

A one-day ticket on the Kojima Jeans Bus allows you to get on and off anywhere on the route, all day long.

Adult: 500 yen Children: 250 yen

Sold until 29 March 2009. Can be used on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays except 26 December to 1 January

Catch the bus from the bus stop in front of JR Kojima station at 09.30, 10.30, 11.30, 12.50, 14.50 and 15.50.

A full lap of the route takes about 35 minutes.

Tickets available at any JR station (JR West)